

In the Claims:

Amend claims 1 and 3, cancel non-elected claims 19 through 27 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add new claims 28 through 30 as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A method for detecting particles in a sample comprising;  
placing a fluid sample into a sedimentation container containing a first slanted solid phase at a location above the first slanted solid phase,  
sedimenting particles in a sample across the first slanted solid phase to concentrate the particles;  
sedimenting the particles across a second solid phase where the second solid phase contains at least one immobilized binding agent capable of binding to at least one particle in the sample, and  
detecting particles bound to the immobilized binding agent on the second solid phase,  
wherein the first and the second slanted solid phase is slanted with respect to a sedimentation path.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the immobilized binding agent comprises plural specific binding agents.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein different specific binding agents are immobilized on different areas regions on the solid phase.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said sedimenting comprises centrifuging the sample.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein at least part of the container contains a density gradient during sedimentation.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles are cells or fragments thereof.

7. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles include at least one type of microorganism.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the microorganism is a virus.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising adding a specific binding agent to either the particles in the liquid sample or to the particles bound to the solid phase.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles are stained before or after sedimentation.

11 through 27. (Cancelled)

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28. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said first slanted solid phase does not have a binding agent immobilized thereon.

29. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said first slanted solid phase has a different binding agent immobilized thereon from said second solid phase.

30. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said sedimentation path of a single particle passes through first slanted solid phase and said second solid phase.